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MOTIVATIONS OF USAGE FOR VIDEO GAME MEDIA AND THEIR EFFECT ON VIDEO GAME CONSUMPTION

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Bachelor's Thesis

Supervisor: Dr. Suzanne Altobello

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ABSTRACT OF
BACHELOR'S THESIS

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Author: Sebastian Juuri

Title of thesis: Motivations of usage for video game media and their effect on video game consumption

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Supervisor: Dr. Suzanne Altobello

Objectives

The main objectives of this study were to find the motivations that drive the usage of video game media platforms and what the relationship between using the different game media types was. The objectives also included examining the effect the usage of the medias have on the consumption of video games themselves.

Summary

Video game medias were divided into three platforms for the research: video game live streams, eSports events, and pre-recorded videos about gaming.

Video gamers and video game media have been studied previously but in an isolated manner focusing on one area of media or on the motivations of playing video games. Previous literature has established that various motivations that existed in consumption of sports and media also translated into consumption of video games and related media. The conceptual framework was derived from these previously used scales and tested with an online survey. The results illuminated differences in motivations between the medias and other factors how the medias differ from each other.

Conclusions

The different game medias had varying motivations for usage, but all reported having a positive effect on video game consumption through media usage. For game streams and pre-recorded game videos, the driving motivation was entertainment, and for eSports events the driving motivation was escapism

Key words: influencer marketing, eSports, consumer behavior, video games
Language: English

Grade:

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Media related to video games has been on a rise in the last ten years, of which much can be contributed to increased access to Internet, and higher connection speeds allowing for more information to be outputted. Especially in the 2010's, media content that is created by users and other third parties that are not directly under the company that produces the game is becoming more prominent. With the rise of video games, also the phenomenon of watching others play video games has risen. People view other people's broadcasts, often called 'streams', of playing a video games over the internet on various websites. The media platform has grown significantly in popularity, and millions of people tune in each day to watch live content of others playing video games (Twitch Advertising, 2017).

Another media form that is growing significantly is eSports spectating. eSports refers to playing video games competitively, in a very similar fashion as traditional sports. Games such as Counter-Strike: Global Offensive, Overwatch, and Dota 2 have regular professional leagues and major tournaments where the prize can reach over one million U.S. dollars. More and more people are able to play a video game professionally because of the revenue stream that eSports entertainment brings in.

In addition to people who play video games competitively for a profession, an increasing number of private citizens are making a profession out of creating content about video games. Content ranges from gameplay videos to game reviews and speedruns, which are attempts to finish a video game as fast as possible, among other content. Many of these creators are being sponsored by established companies and brands.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the effects of the emerging game media content, such as streaming game play, eSports, and watching prerecorded game videos uploaded to YouTube into the video game industry. Previous research has looked separately at what the motivations are for people to play video games or watch game media such as video game streams. The research of this paper seeks to find the connection between motivations of using different types of game media, and how these motivations relate to consumption of the video games by the consumers. It will

focus on finding the different reasons consumers have for spending their time on game related content. The game media ecosystem has already been recognized for its marketing potential through sponsorships, (Twitch Advertising, 2017) but further understanding how consumers use different channels could help to improve business opportunities in the media area.

After the introduction, the literature review will discuss the previous research in the video game industry and related media content. The literature review will conclude in a conceptual framework that has been formed from existing models in closely related research topics. The methodology section will introduce the quantitative method that was used to test the hypotheses proposed in the literature review. After that, the results will be analyzed and discussed. The last section discusses the main findings, implications for international business, and makes suggestions for directions of further research.

1.2 Research problems

Nowadays, digitization and developments in technology have created a phenomenon where there are secondary media platforms that are not directly related to the video game product or the developing company, but still have significant influence into the popularity and publicity of videogames. Videos about playing games on YouTube, livestreaming gameplay and broadcasted eSports tournaments are some of the new media channels that have become massively popular.

Because of their popularity, it is in the interests of management at video game companies to understand the influence these media channels have on the brand of their video game product, and the effect on consumer behavior. The goal is to explore how these phenomena influence the marketing and success of a video game product, and how they shape consumer behavior towards the products.

1.3 Research Questions

The thesis research will aim to answer the following questions:

1. Do the the different game media platforms influence consumption of the video games in general?

2. Are there different motivations to consume the various types of media?

3. How does the consumption of the game media relate to consumption of video games?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objective is to conduct an online survey to measure the motivations individuals have for consuming different game medias, and measuring the consumption of game media and video games in general.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to analyse present findings in the areas of video games, and the related medias of eSports and video game streaming. The review will look at existing literature on video games from a more general standpoint, and also the recently emerged game medias. Research on the user motivations, comparison to older forms of media, and social aspects of gaming are reviewed. Past theories and research based on consumer behaviour towards game media will be included, and will form the conceptual framework.

The conceptual framework will be the last section of this literature review, and will provide the justification for the model used to conduct quantitative research that has been developed from past frameworks to suit game medias.

2.2 Gaming industry

Past research on the gaming industry and the closely related phenomena such as streaming and eSports has garnered more attention in the past few years. eSports refers to playing video games in a competitive setting, where either individuals or teams play against one another very much like traditional sports. Game streaming and competitive gaming have actually grown into such large areas of gaming that people are able to become professional gamers, supporting themselves with prize money, sponsorships and other forms of revenue (Nelson, 2018). As a fairly new

form of pastime and especially as a profession, there is a lot of speculation about the industry and research has ranged from linking video gaming to addictive problems and aggression (Hamari & Macey, 2018; Engelhardt et al., 2015) to motivations for consuming gaming entertainment (Hamari & Keronen, 2017)

Video game streaming is another media platform that has gained significant traction in the past few years. Third parties who are not involved with the game producers usually broadcast their gameplay online for others to spectate on services such as Twitch and YouTube that host streaming for anyone with the equipment to stream their gameplay. The impact of streaming to the marketing landscape in video games is already known in the industry, with one of the recent examples being a streamer going by the nickname ‘Ninja’ receiving reportedly 1 million USD to stream gameplay about the video game Apex Legends. (reuters.com, 2019)

2.3. Consumer behaviour and engagement in video games

Customer engagement in video games plays a key role in video games being a commercial success. Many video games nowadays operate with a business model where a large part of the profits are attempted to be made with in-game purchases designed to keep the players engaged and interested in the game for longer periods of time. There are multiple, sometimes conflicting definitions of customer engagement and Cheung et al. (2015) have acknowledged that. They had narrowed down customer engagement to three dimensions for video games: vigor, as the willingness of players to invest their time in a game; absorption, referring to the situation of being engrossed and concentrated in the game; and dedication, referring to the extent that a player feels inspiration and drive to tackle the challenges of a game. The definition these dimensions define as customer engagement will be henceforth used to refer to customer engagement in video games and the related media channels.

Positive psychological experiences increase the level of engagement, and the increasing level of engagement leads to spending more money on the specific video game product. However, Cheung et al.’s research has heavy limitations restricting it from being applied to the video game industry as a whole. The respondents of the survey were geographically based in Asia, where consumer behaviour and willingness to spend money on in-game purchases and virtual items can differ largely

to other cultures. The research also considered players who play a very limited set of online games compared to many genres and other online games that are present in the industry. Cheung et al. (2015) also only briefly mentioned that research has focused on the social aspect of the video games, and does not take into account how platforms such as game streams, online forums and other social interactions can affect player engagement.

Butcher et al. (2017) conducted qualitative interviews with people who identify as hardcore gamers who participate in gaming culture outside of the video games themselves to find out how brand extensions are perceived and accepted by consumers who identify as gamers. The researchers utilize past findings about brand extensions to have a framework to work with, and also take into account the inelasticity of brand extensions.

The researchers explored how consumer behaviour, especially toward brand extensions differs in the video game industry, and how consumers view themselves as a niche group, where an important aspect of brand extensions is their exclusivity. Fit is also recognized as one of the most important aspects of brand extensions: the more the extension makes sense with the parent product, the more likely it is to be accepted.

One of the important ways that these findings relate to secondary media platforms is that detachment plays a large role in the severity of brand dilution in a failed brand extension. Producers of the games are rarely thought to have “ownership” of the secondary media platforms, such as Twitch streamers who broadcast their games. Thus, sometimes controversial content that appears in game medias such as game streams can be thought to not affect the producers. Butcher et al. (2017) suggested that the closer the game producers are perceived to be related to the media, the more affected they can be by negative events. A person creating controversial content on their own personal stream might not affect the perception of the makers of the video game that the streamer happened to be playing, but if it is a sponsored partner of the game producers then it is more likely to have an impact on the image of the producers. Unethical behaviour in the game can put the firms in a situation where they have to react. Butcher et al. (2017) had significant findings for the video game industry when companies attempt to find ways to further incorporate real-life

events, streamers and other medias into their game products. The perception of ownership towards the brand extensions is also important, as the level of involvement the game companies have with third-party events and influencers like streamers will determine their vulnerability if anything should go wrong. For example, competitive tournaments where the developing company is directly involved will have a heavier impact on perceptions if technical difficulties harm the experience.

2.4. Viewing video game streams

Hamari & Sjöblom (2017) have explored the motivations people have for watching others play video games, and what sort of gratification is involved with the activity. Their research juxtaposes the position of stream watching being between playing video games and watching traditional broadcasts. Stream watching offers a higher level of interaction and communication than traditional broadcasts, but still less than actual playing of video games.

The paper went into depth on what are the underlying motivations for watching streams, and the type of behaviour consumers have, and how different forms of gratification and behaviour correlate. The paper made sharp observations into the aspects of streams, and how there is room to improve especially in the quality of interaction once an individual stream channel grows to such a large size in terms of viewership that personal interaction becomes difficult. The paper also slightly explored the relationship between the broadcasters and the viewers.

Table 1
Uses and Gratifications framework by Hamari & Sjöblom (2017)

Need type	**Description**
Cognitive	Acquiring information, knowledge and comprehension
Affective	Emotional, pleasant, or aesthetic experience
Personal integrative	Enhancing credibility, confidence, and statuts
Social integrative	Enhancing connection with family, friends and so forth
Tension release	Escape and diversion

Hamari & Sjöblom (2017) used the Uses and Gratifications theory to study what motivations and uses direct consumers to watch other people play video games. Notable is the influence social interactions have on the motivation to watch streams, and the connection the social motivation has to other motivators, such as entertainment and information seeking.

The Uses and Gratifications theory is used by several articles related to the subject area of this thesis. The theory argues that consumers of media are active and make choices in which media they consume, and the choices are based on the uses and the gratification the media provides. Uses range from social, entertainment, learning to escape from daily routines. (Katz et al., 1974).

This information carries real weight for streamers, game companies and consumers. Hernandez (2016) pointed out that a significant amount of sales of games can be attributed to consumers having first viewed the game on streaming services such as Twitch. Streaming was also found to increase player retention, and the fact that the game is being broadcast continuously gives visibility to the specific game, and can possibly catch the attention of potential buyers.

Hilvert-Bruce et al. (2018) have also researched motivations people have for watching Twitch live streams, also taking into account the social interactions that are made possible in the service such as donating, and makes the connection between why these features attract users. The study mainly focused on finding social motivators for users, while also acknowledging that some users seek entertainment and learning. Hilvert-Bruce et al. (2018) defined stream sizes as small streams having less than 150 viewers, large streams as those with 500 to 10 000 viewers, and streams with more viewers as very large streams. One of the key points are that small streams attract users who seek deeper social interaction, and to feel belonging to a community and making connections, while larger streams also feature some of these needs being fulfilled, but is not quite as prevalent, and entertainments starts playing a larger role. The findings provide key insights into the unique consumer behaviour existing in the live streaming phenomenon, and how it can be compared to traditional broadcasts. Connections can also be made into the motivators for playing

video games. If motivators are similar, do the same users who watch live streams also play games and vice versa?

Another question has been the needs and desires that people have that direct them towards viewing eSports events and matches. Comparisons have been made to a number of different aspects that were used in traditional sports with the Motivation Scale for Sports Consumption (MSSC) scale. (Hamari, 2017). The most important factors were escaping realism or day-to-day life, novelty, gaining knowledge watching eSports, and enjoyment of aggression in eSports. Aesthetic aspects were negatively correlated.

2.5. Research on proposed adverse effects in gaming media

A connection between different forms of gambling with gaming and eSports spectating has been a speculated question. Correlations are looked for in these areas, along with a definition of problematic gaming symptoms and problematic gambling symptoms to see if there is any connection between the problematic behaviour. (Macey & Hamari, 2018).

Their main findings were that heavy video gaming actually has a negative correlation with any type of gambling, so it does not support the idea that gaming would lead to gambling, or other problematic behaviour. Problematic gaming is also stated to be so nuanced that research into it should differ from the dimensions and frameworks for other types of addiction, such as substances or gambling.

Another problematic behaviour that is often related to video gaming is increased aggression. However, Engelhard et al. (2015) found no actionable evidence that potentially violent video games would influence aggressive behaviour in the real world. For video gaming and related phenomena such as eSports to truly breakthrough into mainstream culture and acceptability, stigmas related to such proposals that have no hard evidence need to be shed in order to achieve increased status in society.

2.6. Motivations of playing video games

Keronen and Hamari (2017) acknowledged the fragmented nature of literature on video games and how to define their uses, motivations and how the motivations correlate to uses. They refer to games as Information Systems, and concluded that

they have two uses: hedonic and utilitarian and use it as a continuum. The authors performed a meta-analysis of existing academic literature on video games and how the literature has approached video games. Several variables are investigated as factors that motivate playing video games, such as enjoyment, perceived usefulness and satisfaction.

The most important findings were that rather than the traditional view of games as pure hedonic products, games are also used for instrumental purposes such as for learning. Though even games that could be considered utilitarian still have enjoyment and hedonic attributes as a key factor for motivation to consume. Playing intention also shows no significant differences across genders, helping to eliminate the stereotypical view of young males being the dominant consumer of video games, and purely for hedonic purposes. (Macey & Hamari, 2017).

Hedonic and utilitarian uses of video game playing share similar themes with other literature that has used the Uses and Gratifications theory to look at motivations for viewing game streams and eSports events.

Considering how internet and technology has resulted in more flexible forms of media than ever before, the theory's applications in the gaming media platforms is quite interesting. Game streams are rather similar to watching television, but chat boxes and interaction with the streamer give it a social aspect. Game walkthroughs can satisfy viewers who are looking for more information. The theory could be expanded to cater for new types of gratification people can achieve from these areas. A sense of achievement when the eSports team you root for wins games could be a motivation for viewers, for example.

2.7. eSports

eSports is a term that refers to video games being played in a competitive manner similar to traditional sports. The evolution of computer hardware, software and internet connection speeds has increased the spread of eSports and helped its popularity rise. In 2015, the amount of hardcore enthusiasts who followed eSports was estimated to be over 100 million (Parshakov & Zavertiaeva, 2018).

The prominence of eSports has resulted in its penetration into the mainstream culture, as evident by mentioning its inclusion in the 2022 Asian Games (Graham 2017).

Lam (2017) noted the business possibilities that are involved with eSports and its popularity. Lam had made comparisons into traditional sports, though some of the comparisons seem rather inaccurate or unconfirmed. In a survey about a third of respondents stated seeing no difference between eSports and athletic sports, and goes on to say that the two are very similar. No context for the survey or any limitations that it might have are made clear along the statement. This is interesting data as public discussion into the status of eSports could become more heated in the future, as recently the director of Germany's Olympic Committee claimed eSports "does not exist" (PCGamer, 2019).

Lam (2017) made the argument for marketing possibilities in the field of eSports not only for the games and the marketing potential around the players, but also for products such as gaming monitors and other equipment in a style very similar to how athletes are used to market clothing and equipment.

Existing literature has compared the similarity of traditional sports and competitive video gaming, otherwise known as eSports (Sjöblom & Hamari, 2016). The comparison is reasonable, as the two share many traits such as competitiveness, structure in leagues and tournaments, and both are spectated by fans of teams, and fans of the sport or game in hand. One of the frameworks that has been used to this end are the SPEED facets by Funk et al. (2009).

SPEED stands for the five facets of motivation: socialization, performance, excitement, esteem and diversion. Socialization refers to the social aspects of spectating sports. Spectators feel that they are part of a collective and are interacting with other spectators. Research by Hilvert-Bruce et al. (2018) has already looked into the social aspects of watching Twitch streams , and most eSports broadcasts feature similar capabilities for social interaction. Performance refers to the aesthetic and impressiveness of feats in sports that spectators admire. Excitement refers to the exhilarating emotions and suspense that arise from competition. Funk et al. (2009) have also found esteem, the fourth facet to play a role in spectating sports. Esteem relates to having a sense of achievement along with a sports team that one

follows, and sharing the glory of the team. The last facet, diversion relates to escaping the daily routines of life, and can be associated to the escapism facet that has been applied in the literature that has used the Uses and Gratifications framework for video games and related media. The SPEED facets share many of the same aspects that are thought of as motivatiors for media usage as does the Uses and Gratifications theory; both feature entertainment, social interaction and escapism as motivators. Hilver-Bruce et al. (2018) have used the aforementioned motivators to previously study motivations for watching game streams, finding entertainment and social interaction as notable motivations.

2.8. Limitations of existing research

Existing literature has individually charted out the motivations that people have for playing video games, watching game streams and spectating eSports. However, the research on the relation between these different pastimes is scarce. Gaming as an entertainment industry and as a sort of lifestyle is becoming established since the late 2010s. Research into the gaming entertainment culture as a sphere of its own is appropriate to understand consumer behaviour and consumption more thoroughly. For frameworks and theories such as the Uses and Gratifications theory, the uses of these game medias related to each other can be uncovered. Are eSports or game streams spectated for different reasons? Does one have more social aspects or learning motivations? There is also limited research into how the usage of these game medias also affects actual video game consumption.

Some of the research that contain surveys also has a skewedness in gender distribution. By total users, the gender difference in Twitch users (Statista, 2016) and videogames in general is more even than what is represented in the respondents. The distribution of video gamers in the United States was measured at 60.39% gamers being males, and 38.74% being females (Statista, 2018). Hamari and Sjöblom's (2017) study had 92.3% male respondents, and Hilver-Bruce et al.'s (2018) study had 95.6% male respondents. The sample profile of past research does not exactly match the balance in demographics in video gamers.

Conceptual framework

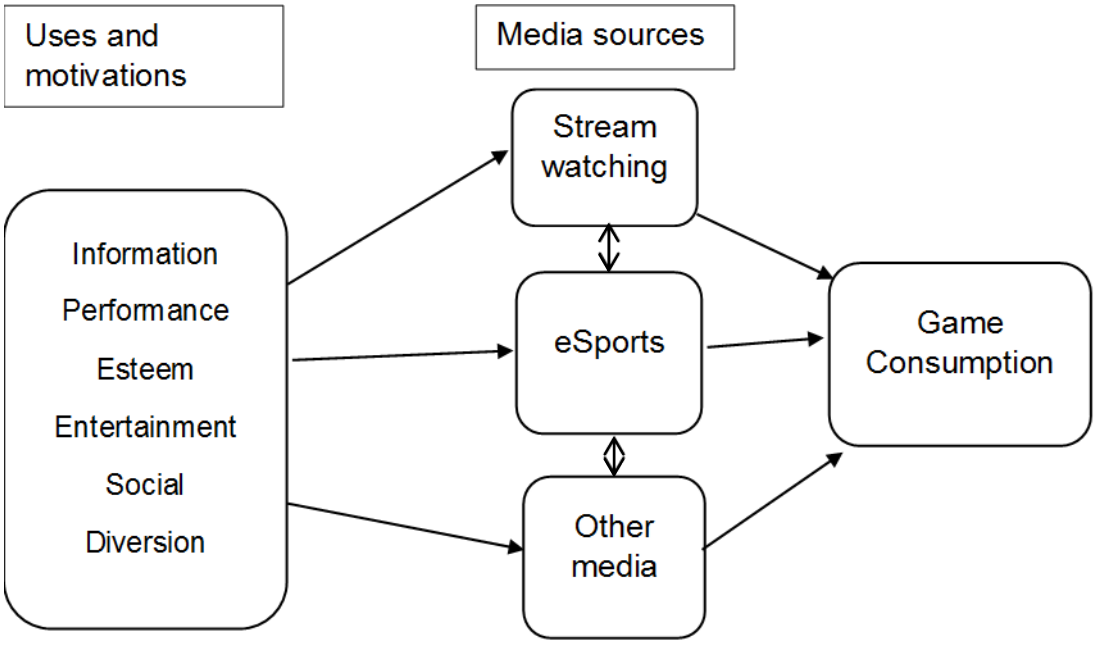

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 has been formed by merging aspects from the Uses and Gratifications theory, and the SPEED facets. Both of them involve looking at the motivations of spectating an event, and share common facets that have been merged, such as social interaction, esteem and identification have been merged, and diversion from daily routines are common aspects in both frameworks. Because of this, it can be considered suitable to combine them to a total of six facets that are used to measure the consumption of gaming-related media.

The contribution of this model is to merge the SPEED facets and Uses and Gratifications models that are very similar, and have separately been used to explore individual areas of the gaming industry. New contributions from the research in this paper is to explore how these motivations differ across different types of game media platforms, and how these motivations differ across different types of game media platforms, and finally to reveal how the use of the medias affect game consumption. Previous research has individually looked at the consumption of games, or one of the gaming medias, but how they interconnect has not previously been looked at.

The aim of the research is to see in what ways the media ecosystem of the gaming industry influences itself and the consumption of videogames.

The conceptual framework is tested as the following hypothesis:

H1: The six motivations positively affect the consumption of gaming streams

H2: The six motivations positively affect the consumption of eSports media

H3: The six motivations positively affects the consumption of other game media

H4: Consuming the different types of media is positively correlated, and consumption of one of them is likely to result in a user also using the other medias.

H5: Watching game streams has a positive effect on game consumption

H6: Watching eSports media has a positive effect on game consumption

H7: Watching other game media has a positive effect on game consumption

In general, the hypotheses will suggest that the uses that have been used to study consumption of other media also work as the uses for consuming video game media, and the consumption of these media increases the consumption of video games presented in the media.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection

This thesis utilizes both primary data and secondary data. The secondary data consists of the past research discussed in the literature review section, and concepts from there were combined to create the conceptual framework. The scales used in the primary research were also adapted from previous literature that had covered subjects similar to the topic of this thesis. The primary research consists of an online questionnaire, which was used to test the conceptual framework and hypotheses.

A quantitative-method online questionnaire was picked as the method for primary research. Past literature of the topic and the scales used originate from quantitative research, and quantitative research best fits the goals of this thesis. Quantitative research can also be generalized from the sample to the population, so the findings can be considered to have more significant implications for international business.

Convenience sampling was the chosen sampling method due to lack of resources for other types of sampling, and also because of time constraints. The survey was constructed using the Webropol survey tool. The questionnaire was posted on several online discussion boards where desired demographics could be plausibly reached. A forum for people interested in technology and hardware, MuroBBS.com, was chosen as one platform where respondents who share the interest field of the survey topic could be found. Another platform was on online discussion website Reddit, in the subreddit r/Suomi, and also subreddit r/SampleSize. On the video game network service Steam, a community named “Gamer Girls” have a discussion forum where the survey was also posted in hopes of gathering more female respondents when the proportion of males was imbalanced in the respondents. These were chosen as they were online discussion channels that permitted academic surveys and gathered large amounts of daily visitors. Additionally, the survey was shared on social media. The survey targeted people who watch video game related media, and postings of the survey also included a description of the topic of the survey to explain who is a relevant respondent to the survey. The survey was open from March 7th to March 11th.

All respondents were informed that the results of the survey would be purely for academic uses in the bachelor’s thesis, and that the responses are anonymous. All respondents participated voluntarily.

3.2 Survey design

The survey discussed in this section can be found in Appendix 1.

The survey was divided into six pages. In the first page, respondents were asked to respond how many hours a week approximately they consume gaming media, and which types of media they watch regularly. Based on the medias they left unchecked

as not viewing them, respective pages from the survey were hidden from the respondents.

Pages two and three consisted of questions related to gaming livestreams. On the second page, respondents were asked to indicate the amount of hours they consume that specific media in a week. Respondents were also asked to rank the three streamers they watch the most. On the third page, respondents were asked to rate statements on a five-point Likert scale from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree” about the streamer they had ranked as their most watched. After that, the respondents were asked to rate their agreement on which motivations they had for consuming gaming livestreams on the same Likert-scale as before. Each motivation had three questions.

On the fourth page, respondents who consume recorded video media about videogames such as YouTube videos were asked to indicate how many hours in a week they consume the specific media. Then the respondents were asked to rate their agreement on which motivations they had for consuming recorded video media about video games in the fashion as on page three about streaming.

On the fifth page, respondents who had indicated they follow eSports, competitive gaming, to answer how many hours in a week they consume eSports media. Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they had physically attended an eSports event to get further insights. Respondents were also asked to state which video game’s eSports events they follow the most. After that, respondents rated their agreement on statements about motivations to consume the media in the same fashion as for the previous medias.

The sixth page contained more questions where the respondents were asked to rate their agreement to statements on the five-point Likert scale, indicating how consumption of game media has affected the consumption of video games themselves. Then the respondents answered where they had accessed the survey link from, their gender, age and nationality.

3.3. Sample

As previously mentioned, convenience sampling was the chosen method for this research. All respondents participated in the survey voluntarily. Convenience

sampling has some faults, such as the fact that a large amount of the respondents shared similar demographics, for example 86 percent of the respondents were male. This could have an effect on the results and needs to be taken into account when making generalizations from the sample. With the limited resources of a university student completing their bachelor's thesis, convenience sampling was the most plausible option to gather a large sample.

In total, the survey was completed by 133 respondents. Three of the respondents were omitted because upon inspecting the responses were deemed unreliable. The three responses consisted of responses such as age being 45454, and all Likert scale type questions were answered with the same value. The three unreliable responses were deleted, leaving a total sample of 130.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Sample profile

The number of reliable responses after inspection is 130. The age of the respondents ranged from 15 to 44 (M = 23,8615, SD = 5,15309) with 69.8 percent of the respondents being aged 25 or younger. The gender distribution of the sample is uneven, as males account for 87.7 percent of the responses. The result could be somewhat expected, as the user base of Reddit is male dominant, and contributed a significant portion of the responses for the research. The sample consists dominantly of Finnish citizens, as 93.8 percent of the respondents were Finnish.

Out of the three types of media listed in the survey, by far the most popular one was consuming pre-recorded videos about gaming, with 89.2 percent respondents stating they watch pre-recorded videos. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents watch video game livestreams on a regular basis, and 55.4 percent of the respondents follow eSports events regularly. The dominance of the pre-recorded videos can partially be explained by the fact that they have existed longer as a media. Videos about gaming have been available since the emergence of video-sharing websites such as YouTube, while eSports and streaming have gained more traction after the development of technology and internet connections has made live broadcasting over the web more prominent.

Respondents who reported that they followed gaming streams were asked to indicate the three streamers they watch the most. Out of 77 respondent, the most prominent streamer mentioned was ‘shroud’ with 20 mentions in the top three of respondents, followed by LaeppaVika with 11 mentions.

Table 2
List of three most-watched game streamers reported by respondents

Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Asmongold	Cohhcarnage	Zaric Zhakaron
LoadingReadyRun	Projared	Game Grumps
Settled	B0aty	Sick_nerd
QRUSHcsgo	Shroud	s1mple
shroud	lirik	draskyl
Forsen	Laeppavika	Sodapoppin
None	None	None
Syndicate	DrDisrespect	UkogMonkey
Simcopter1	Amaz	DrDisrespect
twitch.tv/sjow	twitch.tv/trumpsc	twitch.tv/thijs
Cohh	Teawrex	King Gothalion
Lirik	Andypyro	Sodapoppin
Viss	DrDisrespect	ESL
B0aty	Sick_nerd	Faux_Freedom
Easy Allies	None	None
Shroud	AndyPyro	Fl0m
esl_sc2	sips_	asmongold
Laeppavika	Officialandypyro	Sodapoppin
Yogscast	SovietWombat	Sips
Sips	Yogscast Sjin	Yogscast
Shroud	Dr disrespect	Ninja
Anssi Huovinen	Miko	JugiPelaa
shroud	BeyondTheSummit	A_Seagull
Jerma985	that's	all
LaeppaStream	SovietWomble	Elajjaz
AdmiralBulldog	Shroud	Gorgc
dota2	matumbaman	destiny
Summitqg	Jericho	Andypro
B0aty	Shroud	Summit 1G
LaeppaStream	KabajiOW	mendokusaii
Previously Recorded	Materwelonz	penguinz0
Riot Games	loltyler1	shroud
methodjosh	b0aty	teukka
WinterGaming	McCanning	None
SovietWomble	TheGamingDefinition	Londongaming4fun
Forsen	Avoidingthepuddle	Jerma985
TheTechnoTed	188man	nukahelzi
NicoB7700	The NyanCave	none

Table 2 continued

Shroud	TSM_Viss	DrDisrespect
RaizQT	Octavian01	Quill18
Cryaotic	GTLive	NicoB7700
ChocoTaco	shroud	T90Official
Laeppastream	Shroud	Savjz
Retku	Arcus	Yogidamonk
Shroud	Riot games	Elajjazz
Gorgc	AdmiralBulldog	Rexitus
ESL_CSGO	Jordan "n0thing" Gilbert	s1mple
Richard Lewis	ESL	FaceIt
SovietWomble	CyanidePlaysGames	WarOwl
MOONMOON_OW	A_Seagull	Merchant
Shroud	Sodapoppin	Dokki
LoLGeranimo	Thijs	threatii
B0aty	KuruHS	Yassuo
Backwood666	Statusd112	GameHard4.0
Hugo One	Nightblue3	Boxbox
Imaqtpie	IWDominate	Locodoco
P4wnyhof	Shroud	Stylishnoob
Librizzi	Laeppavika	Trixx
Yogscast	None	None
paszaBiceps	shroud	skadoodle
Fugglet	Aculite	Flambass
Turin	Angry Joe	AVGN

Respondents who indicated that they follow or attend eSports events were asked whether they had physically attended an eSports event. Interestingly, out of 72 respondents, 27 respondents, more than a third, answered ‘Yes’. Respondents were also requested to indicate which game’s eSports events they follow the most. Counter-Strike: Global Offensive was the most popular one, accounting for 26.4 percent of the responses.

Respondents who consumed pre-recorded videos about gaming were also asked whether they themselves had uploaded videogame-related videos online. Out of 116 respondents, 45 answered ‘Yes’.

4.2 Reliability analysis

The survey consisted of six motivation scales that were measured for each of the three medias. The six motivations were also indexed into consumption motivations to

be measured for reliability. The media usage's effect on direct consumption of videogames was also measured as a scale in the survey. A reliability analysis was conducted with Cronbach's alpha as the measurement scale in SPSS. An alpha above 0.7 is considered an acceptable value for internal consistency that allows for reliable analysis of the data (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The Cronbach's alphas of the scales are listed in the table:

Table 3
Reliability analysis of the data and scales

SCALE	CRONBACH'S ALPHA	NUMBER OF ITEMS
Entertainment	0.797	9
Learning	0.872	9
Performance	0.806	9
Esteem	0.862	9
Socialization	0.889	9
Diversion	0.805	9
Consumption motivations (Entertainment, Learning, Performance, Esteem, Socialization, Diversion combined)	0.618	6
Media usage effect on playing (Measured with questions regarding if media usage had led to a respondent increasing time playing games)	0.806	3

The nine items used for each motivation were the questions designed to measure the specific motivation. As seen on Table 3, the alpha's are all above 0.7 except for the consumption motivations, which is not too far off. The frameworks the motivations have been derived from however, have been utilized in previous research. The Uses and Gratifications model (Hamari & Sjöblom, 2015) and the

SPEED facets (Funk et al., 2009) both found the scales reliable previously. Because of this, the scale is still utilized in analysis but the limitation is taken into account.

4.3 Hypotheses testing

The hypotheses that were presented in the literature review section were tested with several tests. Some of the hypotheses were tested with linear regression analysis, and for others, independent t-tests were conducted. For the linear regression tests, the data was filtered so that for the three first hypotheses, only respondents who had indicated that they followed the media in question were included in the testing.

The first hypothesis test measured the motivations that drive the consumption of video game livestreams.

H1: The six motivations positively affect the consumption of gaming streams

Table 4

Model Summary, ANOVA and Coefficients of tbe Linear Regression for game stream watching motivations

					Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,351[a]	,123	,048	9,91305	,123	1,642	6	70	,149

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stream_Escapism, Stream_Entertainment, Stream_Admiration, Stream_Social, Stream_Esteem, Stream_Learning

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	968,080	6	161,347	1,642	,149[b]
	Residual	6878,803	70	98,269		
	Total	7846,883	76			

a. Dependent Variable: How many hours in a week approximately do you watch video game streams on services such as Twitch and YouTube?:
b. Predictors: (Constant), Stream_Escapism, Stream_Entertainment, Stream_Admiration, Stream_Social, Stream_Esteem, Stream_Learning

Table 4 continued

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-8,484	10,499		-,808	,422
	Stream: Entertainment	5,422	2,311	,299	2,347	,022
	Stream: Learning	,564	1,403	,064	,402	,689
	Stream: _Admiration	-,850	1,356	-,098	-,627	,533
	Stream:_Esteem	-1,807	1,542	-,164	-1,172	,245
	Stream: Social	1,654	1,091	,197	1,516	,134
	Stream: Escapism	-,963	1,570	-,070	-,613	,542

a. Dependent Variable: How many hours in a week approximately do you watch video game streams on services such as Twitch and YouTube?:

The results indicate that the complete model of the motivation did not have significance (F(70, 76 = 1,642, p = .149, R2 = ,123) the one motivation that was a significant predictor for the amount of consumption of gaming streams increasing was Entertainment (B = 5.422, *t* = 2.347, p < .05). The other motivations do not seem to have a significant role, however.

A similar linear regression test was also conducted to measure the driving motivations of consumption of eSports events:

H2: The six motivations positively affect the consumption of eSports media

Table 5

Model Summary, ANOVA and Coefficients of the Linear Regression analysis for eSports watching motivations

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,478[a]	,228	,157	3,54899	,228	3,208	6	65	,008

a. Predictors: (Constant), eSports_escapism, eSports_social, eSports_learning, eSports_esteem, eSports_entertainment, eSports_admiration

Table 5 continued

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	242,413	6	40,402	3,208	,008[b]
	Residual	818,698	65	12,595		
	Total	1061,111	71			

a. Dependent Variable: How many hours a week approximately do you spend watching eSports events such as matches or tournaments?:

b. Predictors: (Constant), eSports_escapism, eSports_social, eSports_learning, eSports_esteem, eSports_entertainment, eSports_admiration

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-11,762	4,236		-2,777	,007
	eSports: Entertainment	1,154	1,108	,151	1,042	,301
	eSports: Learning	,421	,545	,101	,773	,442
	eSports: Admiration	1,324	,902	,228	1,469	,147
	eSports: Esteem	-,399	,476	-,103	-,838	,405
	eSports: Social	,415	,434	,122	,957	,342
	eSports: Escapism	,989	,485	,228	2,038	,046

a. Dependent Variable: How many hours a week approximately do you spend watching eSports events such as matches or tournaments?:

Table 5 shows that the model is significant ($F(6,65) = 3.208$, $p < 0.05$, $R2 = ,228$). Out of the motivations, escapism is shown to be a significant motivation in consuming more eSports media ($B = 0.989$, $t = 2.038$, $p < 0.05$). The other motivations do not seem to have a significant role, however.

The same linear regression analysis was also conducted for respondents who indicated they consumed prerecorded video media about gaming. The driving motivations of pre-recorded video consumption were hypothesized as:

H3: The six motivations positively affects the consumption of other game media

Table 6

Model Summary, ANOVA and Coefficients of Linear Regression analysis for pre-recorded game video watching motivations

					Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,319[a]	,102	,052	7,00629	,102	2,061	6	109	,064

a. Predictors: (Constant), prerecord_escapism, prerecord_learning, prerecord_esteem, prerecord_entertainment, prerecord_social, prerecord_admiration

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	606,941	6	101,157	2,061	,064[b]
	Residual	5350,610	109	49,088		
	Total	5957,552	115			

a. Dependent Variable: How many hours a week approximately do you watch prerecorded videos about gaming, for example gameplay videos?:
b. Predictors: (Constant), prerecord_escapism, prerecord_learning, prerecord_esteem, prerecord_entertainment, prerecord_social, prerecord_admiration

Coefficients[a]

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-3,581	5,382		-,665	,507
	Recorded: Entertainment	2,356	1,145	,200	2,058	,042
	Recorded: Learning	-,594	,902	-,077	-,659	,511
	Recorded:_Admiration	-,739	,890	-,108	-,830	,408
	Recorded:_Esteem	,785	,923	,108	,851	,397
	Recorded: Social	,324	,838	,042	,386	,700
	Recorded: Escapism	,865	,788	,105	1,098	,275

a. Dependent Variable: How many hours a week approximately do you watch prerecorded videos about gaming, for example gameplay videos?:

In Table 6, the model was not found to be significant (F(109, 115)= 2,061, p = .064, R2 = .102) but individually, the significant driving motivation for consuming recorded videos about gaming is entertainment (B = 2.356, t = 2.058, p < 0.05).

One of the other objectives of this thesis is to look for how closely related the consumption of the medias are. All of the three medias are plausible to attract the interest of consumers who are interested in video games, and out of the sample all medias were used regularly by more than half of the respondents. From this, another hypothesis is formed:

H4: Consuming the different types of media is positively correlated, and consumption of one of them is likely to result in a user also using the other medias.

Table 7

Crosstabulation of which game medias survey respondents follow

Count

Follow prerecorded videos about video games (For example, gameplay videos)			Follow eSports (Competitive gaming)		
			No	Yes	Total
No	Follow gaming streams (eg. Twitch, YouTube Live)	No	0	4	4
		Yes	2	8	10
	Total		2	12	14
Yes	Follow gaming streams (eg. Twitch, YouTube Live)	No	31	18	49
		Yes	25	42	67
	Total		56	60	116
Total	Follow gaming streams (eg. Twitch, YouTube Live)	No	31	22	53
		Yes	27	50	77
	Total		58	72	130

As shown in Table 7, the largest group based on the crosstabulation is the one that follows all three medias with 42 respondents. 37 of the respondents follow only one media out of the three. Since the amount of respondents who follow all three of the medias is larger than the amount that follows only one, and a majority of the respondents follow at least two medias. This cannot be itself considered to support H4, but the crosstabulation shows that the statement is plausible as a majority of the respondents follow more than one game media.

Independent sample t-testing was conducted to see which of the medias had users who were likely to also consume other gaming-related medias. Respondents were

asked to indicate on a five-point scale as to how much they agree with the statement "Watching one media is likely to make me use another type of game media". For each of the three game medias, the amount of agreement was measured between respondents who responded positively to following a specific game media, and then compared to the level of agreement that those who did not follow that game media. For example, the rate of agreement was measured between those who indicated they follow game streams, and those who do not follow game streams.

Table 8

Rate of agreement between respondents who follow a game media compared to those who do not follow the game media in terms of how likely they are to also consume another game media

	Yes		No		
Method	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-test
Streaming	3,5584	,89580	3,0755	1.05337	.020**
eSports	3,4444	,96252	3,2586	1,101843	n.s.
Prerecorded	3,3534	1,01514	3,4286	,75593	n.s.

As displayed in Table 8, it seems that there is a significantly higher tendency to watch other media by streaming users, but not for the other medias. The results in Table 8 show that those who viewed streaming media indicated higher likeliness to also use other gaming-related media (M = 3.56, SD = .90) than those who do not use streaming media (M = 3.07, SD = 1.05) (t(130) = -3.866 p<.01). This result supports H4, but only reached statistical significance for gaming streams users.

H5: Watching game streams has a positive effect on game consumption

Table 9

Independent Samples t-test of effect of watching game streams to overall video game consumption

	Follows gaming streams	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Viewing game streams has made me play video games more (5-point Likert scale)	No	53	2,4906	1,06740	,14662
	Yes	77	3,1169	1,18070	,13455

Table 9 continued

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Viewing game streams has made respondent play video games more	Equal variances assumed	1,047	,308	-3,089	128	,002	-,62632	,20276
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,147	118,812	,002	-,62632	,19900

The results in Table 9 show that respondents who regularly watched gaming streams had reported significantly higher effect into the amount of time they spend playing video games (M = 3.12, SD = .1.18) than those who do not watch streams regularly (M = 2.49, SD = 1.07) (t(130) = -3.089 p<.003). This means that H5 is supported.

H6: Watching eSports has a positive effect on game consumption

An independent samples t-test was conducted in a similar fashion as was used to test H5.

Table 10

Independent Samples t-test of effect of watching eSports to overall video game consumption, and if eSports watchers play the same games they watch

	Respondent follows eSports (Competitive gaming)	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Watching one of the types of media makes me more likely to also use other types	No	58	3,2586	1,01843	,13373
	Yes	72	3,4444	,96252	,11343
Watching or attending eSports events has made me play video games more	No	58	2,3103	1,04641	,13740
	Yes	72	3,2917	1,28301	,15120
I play the same games I view media content about	No	58	3,8621	,98138	,12886
	Yes	72	4,2222	,80879	,09532

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Watching or attending eSports events has made me play video games more	Equal variances assumed	6,723	,011	-4,699	128	,000	-,98132	,20882
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,803	127,975	,000	-,98132	,20431
I play the same games I view media content about	Equal variances assumed	1,253	,265	-2,294	128	,023	-,36015	,15699
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,247	110,001	,027	-,36015	,16028

Results in Table 10 display that respondents who regularly attend or watch eSports events reported significantly higher effects into the amount of time they spend playing video games (M = 3.29, SD = 1.28) than respondents who do not follow eSports regularly (M = 2.31, SD = 1.05) (t(130) = -4.699 p<.001). This result supports H6. Additionally, it was also discovered that respondents who regularly follow eSports reported playing the same games they consume media about (M = 4.22, SD = .81) more than those who do not follow eSports regularly (M = 3.86, SD = .98) (t(130) = -2.294 p<.025). No statistical significance was found when testing for users of other game medias as to whether they play the same game they watch, so the tests were not presented here in the results.

H7: Watching prerecorded video content about video games has a positive effect on game consumption

Table 11
Independent Samples t-test of effect of watching pre-recorded game media to overall video game consumption

	Follows prerecorded video game media	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Viewing prerecorded game media has made me play video games more (5-point Likert scale)	No	14	2,7143	1,13873	,30434
	Yes	116	3,3966	1,11026	,10309

Independent Samples Test

Viewing prerecorded videos about video games has made respondent play video games more	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	,001	,982	-2-166	128	,032	-,68227	,31495
Equal variances not assumed			-2,123	16,130	,050	-,68227	,32132

As displayed in Table 11, regular users of prerecorded video content about video games reported higher effects on the amount of time spent playing video games (M = 3.39, SD = .1.11) than respondents who do not follow prerecorded video content regularly (M = 2.71, SD = 1.13) (t(130) = -2.166 p<0.05). This result supports H7.

4.4 Additional analyses

Table 12

Descriptive statistics of respondents answers to different qualities about their most watched streamer personality

Statistics

		I feel like [Streamer #1] is: Entertaining	I feel like [Streamer #1] is: Authentic	I feel like [Streamer # 1] is: Skilled at video games	I feel like [Streamer #1] is: Approachable
N	Valid	77	77	77	77
	Missing	53	53	53	53
Mean		4.5844	4.4675	4.1429	4.0260

Rate your agreement to the following statements:I feel like [Streamer #1] is...:Entertaining

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3 - Neither disagree nor agree	2	1.5	2.6	2.6
	4 - Agree	28	21.5	36.4	39.0
	5 - Strongly Agree	47	36.2	61.0	100.0
	Total	77	59.2	100.0	
Missing	-1.00	53	40.8		
Total		130	100.0		

Rate your agreement to the following statements:I feel like [Streamer #1] is...:Authentic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3 - Neither disagree nor agree	6	4.6	7.8	7.8
	4 - Agree	29	22.3	37.7	45.5
	5 - Strongly Agree	42	32.3	54.5	100.0
	Total	77	59.2	100.0	
Missing	-1.00	53	40.8		
Total		130	100.0		

Table 12 continued

Rate your agreement to the following statements:I feel like [Streamer #1] is...:Skilled at video games

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 - Disagree	8	6.2	10.4	10.4
	3 - Neither disagree nor agree	10	7.7	13.0	23.4
	4 - Agree	22	16.9	28.6	51.9
	5 - Strongly Agree	37	28.5	48.1	100.0
	Total	77	59.2	100.0	
Missing	-1.00	53	40.8		
Total		130	100.0		

Rate your agreement to the following statements:I feel like [Streamer #1] is...:Approachable

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 - Strongly Disagree	2	1.5	2.6	2.6
	2 - Disagree	2	1.5	2.6	5.2
	3 - Neither disagree nor agree	14	10.8	18.2	23.4
	4 - Agree	33	25.4	42.9	66.2
	5 - Strongly Agree	26	20.0	33.8	100.0
	Total	77	59.2	100.0	
Missing	-1.00	53	40.8		
Total		130	100.0		

The respondents who indicated they regularly watch live gaming streams were asked to rate their agreement to four aspects about the streamer they indicated they watch the most on a 5-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. As shown in Table 12, the significant majority of respondents indicated that they considered their number one streamer entertaining. Authenticity and Skillfulness also scored high, giving some information on what users seek from the streams they follow the most. As a matter of fact, none of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the streamer in question was Entertaining or Authentic. The streamer being Approachable also scored quite high, but not as high as the other qualities.

5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

5.1. Motivations of media usage

The objectives of this thesis were to apply existing frameworks that had been applied in the gaming industry and similar areas in previous literature, and build connections between the medias that had previously been looked at from an isolated perspective. The main findings partially support the existing literature. The motivations proved to only partially affect the use of video gaming medias for consumers. Also, the hypothesis of the usage of one video game media causing the likeliness of using other video game media was only partly supported. However, the results do provide an interesting insight into what is the main driving motivation for each of the medias. Escapism serving as a significant motivation for eSports consumption is interesting compared to Entertainment being the most significant motivation for following game streams and watching pre-recorded videos about gaming.

Entertainment as the driving motivation in streams and pre-recorded videos could be contributed to users consuming these medias to enjoy video games without the need for mental exertion related to actually plaing a video game. Consumers can be more relaxed and follow along with the person playing the video game without having to do anything themselves. Escapism being the main motivation for following eSports represents an interesting contrast. Is following eSports a more immersive experience where the user can escape their daily life and temporarily live in the environment and excitement of the competitive playing that they are watching? This is an interesting question when thinking about the business implications, for example product advertising can have different forms between these channels. Products more related to an entertainment experience such as energy drinks and snacks might get better exposure in streaming and pre-recorded videos as advertisements. For eSports, advertisements more related to fantasy or the game lifestyle could be more appropriate, perhaps clothing directed towards the gaming subculture are more at home in eSports advertising channels.

5.2. Correlation between using the medias

The result of the fourth hypothesis, where only game stream followers were found to be more likely to also use other game medias is interesting, as there could be a number of reasons why regular users of gaming streams are more likely to also consume other medias compared to others. Possibilites include the fact that eSports is closely tied to streaming, with both platforms having a large presence on sites such as Twitch.com. Many eSports players also stream in their free time. Stream watcher could also gravitate towards prerecorded content, as some of their favorite streamers may record and later post videos of their gameplay that the user might have missed, but are still interested in viewing. Many prominent streaming personalities may also make prerecorded videos in addition to their streaming activity. This poses a business implication for content creators both streaming and making recorded videos, as entry by either ones to the other area could allow them to gain more traction for their media channels.

5.3 Effect of media usage on game consumption

The hypotheses H5, H6 and H7 stated that media usage would positively affect the consumption of video games were supported in the analysis. The findings can imply several things. It also debunks the argument that media where the content of a videogame are shown directly would cannibalize the video game industry which has been argued by some game developers (Makuch, 2016), where consumers would no longer buy the product itself when they can experience the plot and gameplay online. Instead, gaming media is a valuable marketing tool that benefits the producers of the video games and can help create publicity for their product. In today's market landscape these new tools that rely greatly on content produced by third parties outside of the actual production of the video game product needs to be taken into account by companies when deciding the marketing approach for their products. It can even have implications at the development level of a game, as making the game itself more fitting for streaming or develop it to be potentially played in a competitive setting are aspects that can impact development decions for a game, and how it designs the product life-cycle for the game.

All of the three game medias had users who had increased their general video game consumption due to their use different types of game media. The game media platforms serve as advertisement for the games and can help them keep their visibility months after the release of the video game.

5.4. Limitations

There are numerous limitations that need to be taken into account regarding the sample of the quantitative research in this thesis. More than three quarters of the respondents are males, and the results cannot be generalized to both genders with confidence. 91 percent of the respondents were Finnish. Thus, the generalizations that can be drawn from the results can only be considered to define Finnish people with confidence.

5.4 Other findings

The survey responses also indicated some other interesting results. eSports followers indicated that they play the same games that they follow media content about. This could be explained because competitive gaming has displays of high levels of skills and strategies that can require understanding of metaconcepts and mechanics that exist in the game. The eSports events have more to offer to those who are familiar with aspects of the game. Games that are played competitively have high skill ceilings that can demand high involvement from its consumers, which can explain their investment in viewing media content about the game while not playing. For companies that aim to create a video game that has competitive gaming qualities it is important to support a competitive scene to keep the high involvement users invested in the video game product and since the eSports viewers report higher levels of game consumption, it will also mean more regular users for the video games. Today, many games can have a revenue model built on retaining the players and keeping them invested in the game with regularly updated content.

The respondents who indicated they regularly watch live gaming streams were asked to rate their agreement to four aspects about the streamer they indicated they watch the most on a 5-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. As shown in Table 12, the significant majority of respondents indicated that they considered their number one streamer entertaining. Authenticity and Skillfulness also scored high, giving some information on what users seek from the streams they follow the most. As a matter of fact, none of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the streamer in question was Entertaining or Authentic. The streamer being Approachable also scored quite high, but not as high as the other qualities.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. Main Findings

The objective of this thesis was to map out the relations the usage of video game generated by third parties has on game consumption and between the different video game medias. The unique landscape of the video game industry has been the subject of research from many points of view. The aim of the research was to gain a comprehensive view of what drives media consumption in the video game industry and how that translates into the consumption of video games.

Entertainment was found as a motivator that significantly drove the the usage of game streaming and pre-recorded video media platforms, which can be quite expected as most of the media content aims to entertain its viewers.

The research results support the hypotheses, but for all medias. Most motivations were found to not have a significant impact on game media consumption, except for Entertainment for game streams and pre-recorded videos and Escapism for eSports. The hypotheses that game media consumption increases overall video game consumption was supported for all three game medias. Interestingly, the hypothesis that the use of game medias is likely to drive users towards using other game medias was only supported for those who use game streams.

Interestingly, past research into motivations for following Twitch streams, one form of live streaming video games by Hamari and Sjöblom (2017) found social interaction

also as a significant motivation for following game streams. However, in their research it was found to be a significant motivation for watching small-sized streams with less than 500 viewers. Since the motivation was not significant in the research in this paper, the difference could be contributed to different sample profiles or perhaps the survey respondents of this research did not follow small-sized streams mostly.

Cheung et al. (2016) did research on how the environment inside the video game itself related to customer engagement. Since in this study consumption of game media was found to increase general video game consumption, it can be assumed that following game media platforms has a notable role in customer engagement for the video game products, which was not taken into account by the previous studies. Cheung et al's (2016) research and framework could be merged with aspects of this study to further improve the understanding of marketing implications and customer engagement in game media consumers.

6.2 Implications for International Business

As stated in previous sections, the landscape of marketing video games is shifting from being in the control of the video game companies into focusing on the content created by third parties on media platforms such Twitch and YouTube. For game development companies, the situation demands understanding of how the exposure available in these medias can be utilized for their products and see what business opportunities are to be found.

The fact that media consumption has an effect on the consumption of games themselves means that investment in these media channels is an opportunity that companies should not miss out on, and find out what is the best fit of media for their game product. ‘

The motivations that are specific to game medias has notable implications in the field of marketing for game media channels. Knowing the motivations that consumers have for consuming the game medias can help in figuring out what type of products and services have a good fit and the target market is appropriate for the game media channel. Watching game streams and pre-recorded videos is motivated by the need for entertainment, so likely the products marketed in these channels should somehow connect to the overall concept of entertainment. Escapism was the driving

motivation for watching eSports, so a marketing approach of advertising escape from daily routines could be an effective approach.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Research

This study had several research which should be avoided in further work with the topic. The sample had limitations related to the gender distribution, and further research should find ways to get a more balanced sample to get data that can be extrapolated to females. Since the majority of respondents are Finnish, looking for cultural differences in the motivations for media usage could create interesting comparisons.

Using a larger sample and creating more scales of involvement between the different media usages could also create more additional insights. Another method of gathering the sample should be used to see if the findings remain similar.

Finally the conceptual framework could be modified according to the scales that it has been derived from to test the integrity and similarity of the framework.

REFERENCES AND APPENDICES

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Appendix A

Gaming media platform survey

This survey is created for the purposes of my Bachelor's thesis at Aalto University. Participation in this survey is anonymous and all information will be handled confidentially. The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes.

The questionnaire is about usage of media related to video games such as broadcasting video games live, esports events (competitive gaming) and other media such as prerecorded videos on YouTube.

Video game media means content such as streams, videos and broadcasts that contain content specifically about video games and playing video games.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please email me at sebastian.juuri@aalto.fi

1. In hours a week, what is the approximate amount of time you spend consuming ALL TYPES OF video game media? (FOR EXAMPLE, Twitch streams) is on average_____ hrs per week: *

2. Check all of the game media you follow on a regular basis. (LEAVE medias you don't follow unchecked). *

- [ ] Gaming streams (eg. Twitch, YouTube Live)
- [ ] eSports (Competitive gaming)
- [ ] Prerecorded videos about video games (For example, gameplay videos)

On the next two pages, the questions will be regarding **live streaming** content about video games.

Live streaming refers to broadcasting live gameplay on services such as Twitch and YouTube.

3. How many hours in a week approximately do you watch video game streams on services such as Twitch and YouTube? *

6. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I watch video gaming streams because: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find it enjoyable *	○	○	○	○	○
I have fun while watching *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching live stream gaming is exciting *	○	○	○	○	○
It gives me information about the game's mechanics *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn how to play a game better *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn new tactics *	○	○	○	○	○
To admire the performance of the player(s) I'm watching *	○	○	○	○	○
To see what being highly skilled in the game looks like *	○	○	○	○	○
To see high-skill plays *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I am a part of the achievements of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To enjoy the success of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a sense of accomplishment when the player(s) win *	○	○	○	○	○
To interact socially with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I'm part of a community *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a chance to socialize with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To forget about school, work or other obligations *	○	○	○	○	○
I have nothing better to do *	○	○	○	○	○
To pass the time away *	○	○	○	○	○

On this page, we will discuss **prerecorded video media** about video games. Examples include gameplay videos, walkthrough, and highlight videos.

Think more of content produced by private individuals rather than content that would be created by marketing departments, such as trailers and announcements.

7. How many hours a week approximately do you watch prerecorded videos about gaming, for example gameplay videos? *

8. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I watch prerecorded videos (for example, YouTube videos like walkthroughs, gameplay) about video games because: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I use videos about gaming to get a more honest opinion of a video game *	○	○	○	○	○
I watch videos about a game to experience it without having to buy the product *	○	○	○	○	○
I watch videos about a game to help decide whether I should buy it *	○	○	○	○	○

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4. Please name the 3 Gaming Streamers you watch the most (1. being the one you watch the most). Write the name of the person (first and last) or the name of the channel. *

1. *	
2. *	
3. *	

5. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I feel like is... *

	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neither disagree nor agree	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
Entertaining *	○	○	○	○	○
Authentic *	○	○	○	○	○
Skilled at video games *	○	○	○	○	○
Approachable *	○	○	○	○	○

6. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I watch video gaming streams because: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find it enjoyable *	○	○	○	○	○
I have fun while watching *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching live stream gaming is exciting *	○	○	○	○	○
It gives me information about the game's mechanics *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn how to play a game better *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn new tactics *	○	○	○	○	○
To admire the performance of the player(s) I'm watching *	○	○	○	○	○
To see what being highly skilled in the game looks like *	○	○	○	○	○
To see high-skill plays *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I am a part of the achievements of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To enjoy the success of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a sense of accomplishment when the player(s) win *	○	○	○	○	○
To interact socially with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I'm part of a community *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a chance to socialize with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To forget about school, work or other obligations *	○	○	○	○	○
I have nothing better to do *	○	○	○	○	○
To pass the time away *	○	○	○	○	○

On this page, we will discuss **prerecorded video media** about video games. Examples include gameplay videos, walkthrough, and highlight videos.

Think more of content produced by private individuals rather than content that would be created by marketing departments, such as trailers and announcements.

7. How many hours a week approximately do you watch prerecorded videos about gaming, for example gameplay videos? *

8. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I watch prerecorded videos (for example, YouTube videos like walkthroughs, gameplay) about video games because: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I use videos about gaming to get a more honest opinion of a video game *	○	○	○	○	○
I watch videos about a game to experience it without having to buy the product *	○	○	○	○	○
I watch videos about a game to help decide whether I should buy it *	○	○	○	○	○

9. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I watch prerecorded videos (for example, YouTube videos like walkthroughs, gameplay) about video games because: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find it enjoyable *	○	○	○	○	○
I have fun while watching *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching prerecorded videos about gaming is exciting *	○	○	○	○	○
It gives me information about the game's mechanics *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn how to play a game better *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn new tactics *	○	○	○	○	○
To admire the performance of the player(s) I'm watching *	○	○	○	○	○
To see what being highly skilled in the game looks like *	○	○	○	○	○
To see high-skill plays *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I am a part of the achievements of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To enjoy the success of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a sense of accomplishment when the player(s) win *	○	○	○	○	○
To interact socially with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I'm part of a community *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a chance to socialize with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To forget about school, work or other obligations *	○	○	○	○	○
I have nothing better to do *	○	○	○	○	○
To pass the time away *	○	○	○	○	○

10. Have you yourself made prerecorded gaming videos and posted them online? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

On this page, questions will be regarding **eSports**.

eSports is playing video games in a **competitive setting** where one or more players attempt to win against others.

The competition may be organized around a league or a tournament.

11. How many hours a week approximately do you spend watching eSports events such as matches or tournaments? *

12. Have you physically attended an eSports event? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

13. Which game's eSports events do you follow the most? *

*

14. Rate your agreement to the following statements:

I watch or attend eSports events because: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find it enjoyable *	○	○	○	○	○
I have fun while watching *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching eSports is exciting *	○	○	○	○	○
It gives me information about the game's mechanics *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn how to play a game better *	○	○	○	○	○
To learn new tactics *	○	○	○	○	○
To admire the performance of the player(s) I'm watching *	○	○	○	○	○
To see what being highly skilled in the game looks like *	○	○	○	○	○
To see high-skill plays *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I am a part of the achievements of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To enjoy the success of the player(s) *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a sense of accomplishment when the player(s) win *	○	○	○	○	○
To interact socially with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To feel like I'm part of a community *	○	○	○	○	○
To get a chance to socialize with others *	○	○	○	○	○
To forget about school, work or other obligations *	○	○	○	○	○
I have nothing better to do *	○	○	○	○	○
To pass the time away *	○	○	○	○	○

15. Rate your agreement to the following statements: *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I play the same games I view media content about *	○	○	○	○	○
I am likely to try a game I have viewed media content about *	○	○	○	○	○
Seeing a game get significant media attention and viewership increases my interest in the game *	○	○	○	○	○
Viewing game streams has made me play video games more *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching or attending eSports events has made me play video games more *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching prerecorded video game content has made me play video games more *	○	○	○	○	○
Watching one of the types of media makes me more likely to also use other types *	○	○	○	○	○

16. How did you hear about this survey? *

- ○ From a URL link shared by the survey creator
- ○ From a link shared on an online discussion board
- ○ From a link shared on social media
- ○ From a link shared by a friend
- ○ Other (please clarify) _____

17. Gender *

- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Other

18. Age *

19. Nationality *